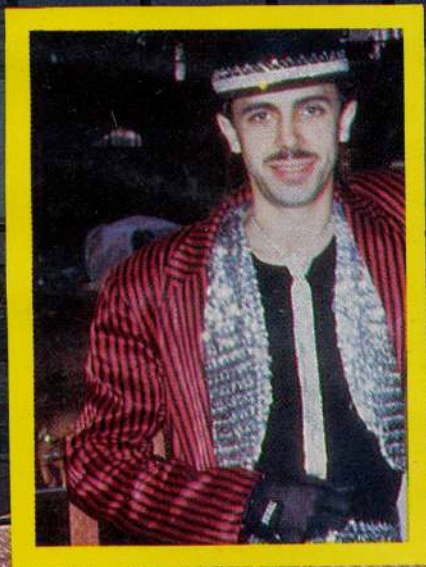


OCTOBER 1985

2.00

LOW RIDER



CHEECH 'n CHONG

In East L.A.

"ZORO"

The Beat Behind New Edition

K-ACE

Rich Guzman

2080



ZORO

It was only one year ago that Zoro was playing the East and West L.A. Night Club circuit with groups like Nu Breeze and others. Today, Zoro is drummer for one of the most popular groups on the music scene "New Edition" who's self-titled album has gone double platinum selling over two million copies. Their concert dates have all sold out and Zoro can be seen in the New Edition's video *Secret Love* along with members of the L.A. Lakers.

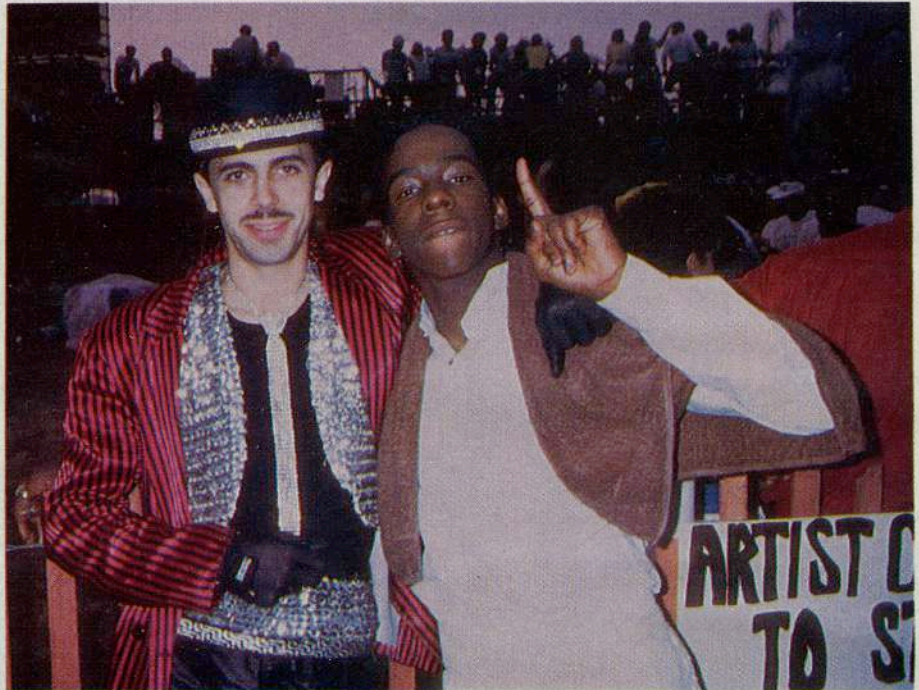
Just back from the groups U.S. tour, I got a chance to speak with Zoro, a 22-year-old Latino, about his involvement with New Edition and his interest in music.

It seems that at the early age of 16, Zoro became interested in drums but not being able to afford the real thing had to settle for one snar drum instead of the full set. "I would play snar drum all day till finally I bought my own drum set. I felt I had the natural feel for drums and I became obsessed, practicing eight hours a day. Then six months later I was playing in the school band and the local groups. But I was always practicing wanting to be a well versed musician in all styles. I would listen to El Chicano records, jazz, classical, hard rock and just music of all sorts. With my mother listening to Jorge Negrate, Pedro Infante and my brothers and sisters into soul and R&B, I really had no preference," said Zoro.

Once graduated from high school, Zoro decided to apply and was accepted at Berkeley College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts where he studied composition, arrangements and harmony for one-and-a-half years before returning to Los Angeles. Says Zoro of his experience, "It was a sacrifice I made knowing that in the future I would need the knowledge to write and play my own material to express myself artistically and possibly bring something new into the industry."

Upon returning to L.A., Zoro did alot of studio work and played with Philip Baily, Rockwell and various other R&B artists before being recommended to the New Edition management by Romeo Blue. The group was in need of a drummer and Zoro was asked to audition. "They auditioned drummers for about ten days in L.A. and the same amount of time in New York. The group liked my personalized style, the Zoro

Photo by Dan Barrot
Text by El Larry



Zoro and singer Bobby Brown

look, etc., and my ability to read music and learn quickly. Of course my age didn't hurt me," said Zoro. "The guys are great to play with and be around. There are no big egos and we all strive to be the best at what we do. We are now working on a new album and a Christmas album to be released in the November. I've been asked to play in both and plans also call for a world tour in '86.

My personal plans are to enjoy and contribute as much as I can to New Edition, and in the future work, with other groups.

My ultimate goal is to write and perform my own material having sung lead in the past, but now just doing back-up vocals."

Whatever Zoro undertakes, given the zeal with which he pursues all his objectives and the way he strives to do his best, I'm sure his ambitions are not far beyond his reach.

I enjoyed meeting Zoro and seeing him perform and you can't help when speaking to him, to absorb a taste of the energy and optimism that he radiates. And to use Zoro's own words, "If you work hard for something and keep at it, it can be yours."

